About the Instructor

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11am to 12:30pm, and by appointment

Welcome

Welcome to Ethics and Professional Issues in Psychology! I look forward to guiding you through this course. My hope is to help you learn as much as possible about ethical issues in psychology and, ideally, inspire you to learn more beyond this course.

Bio

I am a clinical psychologist and have been a professor in the SIUE Department of Psychology for over 25 years. In addition to this course, I teach Foundations of Psychology (PSYC 111), Clinical Psychology (PSYC 450), Counselling and Psychotherapy of the Individual Adult (PSYC 537b) and Practicum in Clinical Psychology (PSYC 523), among others. I have published numerous articles in journals related to clinical psychology, most of which focus on ethical and professional issues in psychotherapy. In addition to my academic position, I also maintain a small, part-time private practice in which I see a wide range of therapy clients.

I earned a BA in Psychology from Washington University in St. Louis, and an MA and PhD in Clinical Psychology from Saint Louis University. I completed my predoctoral internship at Indiana University School of Medicine.

My wife and I live in St. Louis (University City, to be specific), and we have two sons who are now young adults.

Communicating with the instructor

The best way to contact me is through email: apomera@siue.edu. I typically reply within 24 hours.

About the Course

Course description

From the SIUE Course Catalog description of this course: "Ethical and professional issues in the field of psychology, especially as outlined in the Code of Ethics of the American Psychological Association." It is worth 3 credit hours.

Prerequisite knowledge and credit hours

Graduate standing in Psychology or permission of instructor.

Course goals and objectives

This course is intended to familiarize students with the essential concepts, theories, and applications relevant to ethical issues in psychology. Professional issues relevant to ethics will also be incorporated. The most recent code of ethics of the American Psychological Association will form the basis of the course. A goal is for students to heighten awareness to ethical issues as they may arise in the practice of psychology and to learn methods of developing coherent, defensible, reasoned strategies for dealing with such situations. All areas of psychology practice, including psychotherapy, assessment, research, teaching, and consultation, will be addressed. Another goal of the course is to appreciate the evolution and revision of the ethics code throughout the history of the psychological profession.

The course will focus on the APA code of ethics, with the textbook by Celia Fisher (who chaired the task force that conducted the most recent revision of the code) serving as an annotated guide. The course will also feature real-life examples of ethical dilemmas, with the collection of cases edited by W. Brad Johnson and Gerald P. Koocher providing numerous challenging, complex cases to discuss.

Course texts

Fisher, C. B. (2023). Decoding the ethics code: A practical guide for psychologists.
        (5th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Johnson, W. B. & Koocher, G. P. (Eds.) (2011). Ethical conundrums, quandaries, and
        predicaments in mental health practice: A casebook from the files of experts. New York: Oxford University
        Press.
American Psychological Association (2017). Ethical principles of psychologists and
        code of conduct including 2010 and 2016 amendments. Retrieved from
        https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf or http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx

Course activities/assessments

There are multiple ways for you to learn the material in the course, including completion of the assigned readings, attending class, and participation in the discussions. You will be assessed by your level of participation and by completing 7 writing assignments that include a variety of different types of factual and applied questions.

Grading

Students' grades will be determined according to their scores on 8 assessments. Seven of these assessments are a series of writing assignments due at approximately equal intervals throughout the course and worth approximately equal amounts of points (50-75 points each, with specific points possible posted on each item within each assignment). The eighth assessment is a participation grade that reflects class attendance as well as frequency and quality of in-class participation throughout the semester (75 points total, or 5 points per class period). Each writing assignment will assess students' learning in a variety of ways, including questions focused on factual knowledge, questions focused on applied knowledge, questions prompting critical thinking, and questions focused on conceptual understanding. Course grades will be assigned according to the following criteria, with a total of 455 points possible:

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90-100% of total points possible=A
80-89%=B
70-79%=C
60-69%=D
below 60%=F

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I will monitor assignments closely for plagiarism and use of AI (including ChatGPT), both of which are prohibited. I will monitor closely for use of ChatGPT or similar AI software. I will use any and all available technology to detect students' use of it, and we will also "pre-ChatGPT" the questions myself, with multiple repetitions, to familiarize myself with the types of responses that ChatGPT generates. See the university policy statement (later in this syllabus) regarding the serious consequences of plagiarism or the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT. Also, I am aware that some students may be tempted to try the shortcut of googling keywords in the question (or googling the entire question) and then copying and pasting what they find on the Internet. Of course, that approach is completely unacceptable and is a violation of the university's plagiarism policies. It denies you the opportunity to fully learn the assigned material, and it creates the possibility of learning inaccurate information from random Internet sources rather than the information selected for inclusion in the textbook and other course materials. For that reason, I "pre-google" the questions before I grade your assignments and keep the results of that Google search in mind when I read the assignments you submit. That process makes it much easier for me to catch students who use this approach. Of course, plagiarizing directly from the textbook is also disallowed.

Submitting work

All written work will be submitted via Blackboard. If you ever encounter problems with Blackboard, as a backup, please email the work to me if possible (apomera@siue.edu). When assignments are submitted after the submission deadline, a penalty of 25% of the possible points will be deducted for each 24-hour period by which the assignment is late, with the first 25% deduction occurring immediately after the submission deadline.

Feedback and grading timeline

My goal is to grade the brief writing assignments promptly, typically within a day or two (occasionally longer). You can find your grade by clicking the My Grades link on the left menu of the Blackboard course. To see specific feedback on your written assignments, click on the assignments themselves and look for comments that have been made in the margin of the paper itself.

Course Schedule

Topic #	Topic	Reading Assignment	Assignment #	Assignment Deadline
1	• History/Evolution of APA Ethics Code • Introductory Sections of Code	• Fisher Chapter 1; Johnson & Koocher Preface (p. 1-5) • Fisher Chapter 2 and 3	1	Wednesday May 8 at 11:59pm
2	• Standards for Resolving Ethical Issues • Standards on Competence	• Fisher Chapter 5 • Fisher Chapter 6; Johnson & Koocher Chapters 21, 31, and 35	2	Friday May 10 at 11:59pm
3	• Standards on Human Relations	• Fisher Chapter 7; Johnson & Koocher Chapters 1, 2, 14, 17, 20, 30 (additional optional chapters—18, 22, 36)	3	Monday May 13 at 11:59pm
4	• Standards on Privacy and Confidentiality	• Fisher Chapter 8	4	Wednesday May 15 at 11:59pm
5	• Standards on Advertising and other Public Statements • Standards on Record Keeping and Fees	• Fisher Chapter 9 • Fisher Chapter 10	5	Friday May 17 at 11:59pm
6	• Standards on Education and Training • Standards on Research and Publication	• Fisher Chapter 11; Johnson & Koocher Chapter 28 • Fisher Chapter 12	6	Tuesday May 21 at 11:59pm
7	• Standards on Assessment • Standards on Therapy • Ethical Decision Making	• Fisher Chapter 13 • Fisher Chapter 14; Johnson & Koocher Chapters 3, 19 • Fisher Chapter 4	7	Friday May 24 at 11:59pm

Subject to change notice

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.

Course Policies and University Policies

Academic integrity/plagiarism

Students are reminded that the expectations and academic standards outlined in the Student Academic Code (3C2) apply to all courses, field experiences and educational experiences at the University, regardless of modality or location. Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, or dismissal from the University, per the SIUE academic dishonesty policy. Students are responsible for complying with University policies about academic honesty as stated in the University's Student Academic Conduct Code.

Unless expressly allowed by the instructor, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and applications (including ChatGPT, DALL-E, and others) to produce content for course assignments and assessments is a violation of SIUE's academic policy and is prohibited.

Recordings of Class Content

Faculty recordings of lectures and/or other course materials are meant to facilitate student learning and to help facilitate a student catching up who has missed class due to illness or quarantine. As such, students are reminded that the recording, as well as replicating or sharing of any course content and/or course materials without the express permission of the instructor of record, is not permitted, and may be considered a violation of the University's Student Conduct Code (3C1), linked here: https://www.siue.edu/policies/3c1.shtml.

Diversity and Inclusion

SIUE is committed to respecting everyone's dignity at all times. In order to learn, exchange ideas, and support one another, our virtual and physical classrooms must be places where students and teachers feel safe and supported. Systems of oppression permeate our institutions and our classrooms. All students and faculty have the responsibility to co-create a classroom that affirms inclusion, equity, and social justice, where racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, xenophobia, and other social pathologies are not tolerated. Violations of this policy will be enforced in line with the SIUE Student Conduct Code.

The Inclusive Excellence, Education, and Development Hub is an excellent resource for students for support and community. Any person who believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination or harassment can contact Lindy Wagner, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Inclusive Excellence, Education and Development at (618) 650-3179 or linwagn@siue.edu.

Pregnancy and Newly Parenting Policy

This policy and procedure are established to ensure the protection and equal treatment of pregnant students, students with pregnancy-related medical conditions including as a result of the termination of pregnancy, and students who become new parents including parents adopting or fostering to adopt for the first 12 weeks a child is in the home, in accordance with Federal and State guidelines and regulations. "New Parents" refers to a parent who has recently welcomed a newborn or adopted a child or is fostering to adopt a child and needs support to mitigate the disruption in academic progress within the first 12 weeks of parenting or a parent that needs support due to medical necessity attributed to pregnancy or delivery of a child; care of newborn; or lactation within the first year of child's life or legal adoption/fostering. Visit Policies & Procedures - Student Rights and Conduct - Newly Parenting Policy - 3C15 to view the full policy and learn how to request accommodations through the Office of Equal Opportunity, Access, and Title IX Coordination (EOA).

Technology Privacy Information

We will be using Blackboard in this course. View the Anthology Blackboard Privacy Statement to review how your data is being used and stored.

Additional Support

Services for Students Needing Accommodations
It is the policy and practice of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment of achievement—such as time-limited exams, inaccessible web content or the use of non-captioned videos—please contact Accessible Campus Community and Equitable Student Support (ACCESS) as soon as possible. In order to properly determine reasonable accommodations, students must register with ACCESS either online at siue.edu/access or in person in the Student Success Center, Room 1203. You can also reach the office by emailing us at myaccess@siue.edu or by calling 618-650-3726.

If you feel you would need additional help in the event of an emergency situation, please notify your instructor to be shown the evacuation route and discuss specific needs for assistance.

Academic and Other Student Services
As an enrolled SIUE student, you have a variety of support available to you, including:

- Lovejoy Library Resources
- Academic Success Sessions
- Tutoring Resource Center
- The Writing Center
- Academic Advising
- Financial Aid
- Campus Events
- Counseling Services

If you find that you need additional support, please reach out to me and let me know.

Cougar Care
Dealing with the fast-paced life of a college student can be challenging, and I always support a student's decisions to prioritize mental health. Students have access to counseling services on campus (Student Success Center, 0222). Make an appointment by visiting cougarcare.siue.edu or by calling 618-650-2842.

Student Success Coaches
Student success coaches work across campus to serve the SIUE student population with the tools and resources to adjust to and meet the demands of the college experience. Success coaches provide direct services such as time management support and referrals to campus resources. If you find yourself in need of academic or personal support, or in a situation that is preventing you from being successful in the classroom, please utilize Starfish to connect with a coach as soon as possible. The sooner you engage, the sooner you can access the information or tools you need that may help you get back on track.

Technical Support
For this course, you are expected to have reliable Internet access on a regular basis. It is your responsibility to address any computer problems that might occur. Such problems are not an excuse for delays in meeting expectations or for missing course deadlines.

Contact ITS at 618-650-5500 or at help@siue.edu with any technical concerns. You can also check the functionality of University systems, including Blackboard, at the ITS System Status page, or search the ITS Knowledge Base for various how-to and troubleshooting guides.

Tips for taking online assessments:
- Set up a wired (Ethernet) Internet connection on your computer
- Do not use a mobile device, such as a phone or tablet
- Read the instructions and directions carefully

- Be prepared to complete the assessment in the allotted time